UNITED NATIONS

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General Assembly
Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

A/50/222
S/1995/491
16 June 1995
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Fiftieth session
Item 26 of the preliminary list*
THE SITUATION IN BURUNDI

SECURITY COUNCIL
Fiftieth year

Letter dated 15 June 1995 from the Permanent Representative of Burundi to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to inform you that in the framework of the permanent consultations between the authorities of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL), their Excellencies General Paul Kagame, Vice-President of the Rwandese Republic and Minister of Defence, Admiral Mavula, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Zaire, and Lieutenant Colonel Firmin Sinzoyiheba, Minister of Defence of the Republic of Burundi, held their second meeting at Bujumbura on 10 June 1995.

I transmit herewith the final communiqué issued at the conclusion of their work (see annex).

I should be grateful if you would have this letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 26 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Tharcisse NTAKIBIRORA
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

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ANNEX

Final communiqué of the second meeting of the Ministers of Defence and Security of the States members of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries, held at Bujumbura on 10 June 1995

In the course of their meeting the three Ministers of Defence reviewed the overall security situation in the subregion in general and in the States members of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (CEPGL) in particular.

They expressed their grave concern at the worsening security situation as a result of the proliferation of arms in the subregion, and they focused their discussions on the following points:

(a) Formalization of the framework for permanent consultation between senior military officials in border areas;

(b) Consideration and proposal of solutions to the problem of the presence in the subregion of armed, destabilizing elements, both internal and external;

(c) A search for ways and means to put an end to the disturbing presence of instruments of war and propaganda undermining peace, security and trust in the States members of CEPGL, and the subregion in general;

(d) Establishment of permanent machinery for joint monitoring of common borders;

(e) Formulation of the terms of reference of a study on the promotion of military cooperation within CEPGL.

Following their discussions, the Ministers of Defence and Security adopted the following decisions:

(a) To establish a Tripartite Subcommission on Security with the following functions:

(i) To conduct reconnaissance, verification, monitoring and other activities in an effort to counter the circulation of instruments of war and subversion as well as elements not currently subject to control on both sides of common borders;

(ii) To receive and respond to security-related complaints from the States members of CEPGL;

(iii) To implement decisions of the meeting of Ministers of Defence and of the summit of Heads of State of CEPGL relating to security;

(iv) To report to the meeting of Ministers of Defence on their activities in the field;

(v) To propose to the meeting of Ministers of Defence appropriate measures for the strengthening of peace and security along common borders in the event of non-compliance with decisions taken;

(b) The Ministers of Defence and Security recognized that the proliferation of weapons in the subregion, the presence of armed, destabilizing elements, both internal and external, and instruments of war and propaganda undermining peace and security constitute the key factors in the security situation in the States members of CEPGL. They agreed that ultimately a lasting solution to the question of peace in the subregion would have to involve the voluntary return, in a prompt and organized manner, of refugees to their countries of origin, in accordance with the provisions of international law and the Convention of the Organization of African Unity on African refugees, as well as the tripartite agreements on the repatriation of refugees. To that end, the Parties undertook to adopt the following measures:

(i) Identification and internment of activists;

(ii) Prohibition of their activities in the territory of the other countries;

(iii) Their expulsion from the national territory;

(iv) Denial of entry visas to them;

(v) Revocation of political refugee status, in accordance with international law;

(vi) Population monitoring at refugee sites, so as to prevent refugees from being recruited and from taking part in activities against the security and sovereignty of the three States;

(c) Convinced that joint monitoring of common borders bolsters and supports at the same time permanent consultation among the administrative authorities and the border police, the Ministers of Defence and Security signed an agreement on the establishment, organization and operation of the Tripartite Subcommission on Security. In that connection, the Subcommission will have to introduce specific measures to solve the following issues:

(i) The permeability of borders;

(ii) The organization of joint patrols along common borders;

(iii) The abuse of CEPGL passes;

(iv) Efforts to combat subversive activities along common borders, as well as other acts creating insecurity;

(d) In order to consolidate and enhance the effectiveness of their meetings, the Ministers of Defence instructed the relevant departments to prepare specific proposals for the next meeting in the following areas:

(i) Sporting exchanges among the armies of the three countries;

(ii) Exploration of all the options for technical military cooperation among the three countries;

(iii) The possibility of exchanging military attachés.

In addition, they decided to mobilize all their resources needed for optimum functioning of the Tripartite Subcommission on Security. The Permanent Executive Secretary of CEPGL is requested to appeal for international cooperation with a view to obtaining additional resources.